



**Planning Department**

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***INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION***

**To:** Planning Board

**Date:** May 13, 2016

**From:** Kristen Guichard, AICP, Assistant Town Planner

*KSG*

**Subject:** Acton Technology Center 1&3 Post Office Square  
Sign Special Permit Application

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**Location:** 531 Main Street

**Applicant:** Werner F. Gossels, Trustee of Lain Realty Trust

**Property Owner:** Laine Realty Trust

**Sign Type:** 2 freestanding signs

**Bylaw Sections:** 7.13.1.1 and 7.13.1.2 (c)

**Map & Parcel:** E4-67

**Zoning:** Light Industrial-1 (LI-1)

**Public Hearing:** May 17, 2016

**Decision Deadline:** August 15, 2016

**Overview:**

The request is for two (2) freestanding business center signs to be located at the front of the building at 531 Great Road. Currently the businesses share one small freestanding sign located on the lower level near the northerly entrance off Main Street. (The application proposes replacement of this sign.) The Zoning Bylaw, Section 7.8.5.2 allows by-right one freestanding sign, with specific standards for dimensions and placement. The Applicant is seeking special permit exemptions from the by-right standards to allow for two freestanding signs larger than normally allowed. The Bylaw, Section 7.13 provides the scope and limits for special permit exemptions and the standards by which to evaluate the exemption request.

Other Town departments/committees have also reviewed the application and appear to have no issues with the sign special permit application and/or request. The applicant has received all department/committee comments and a copy of this memo.

**Comments:**

1. The applicant is seeking an exemption under ZBL section 7.13.1.1 to allow for two freestanding business center signs where only one is allowed by-right. The Board has the authority to grant a greater number of signs than allowed under Section 7.7 and 7.8.

- a. One business center sign is proposed in front of the parking lot near the southerly entrance off Main Street (upper level); the other is proposed in the grass area near the northerly entrance off Main Street (lower level).
2. The Applicant is also seeking an exemption under ZBL section 7.13.1.2(c) to allow for 40 square feet in display area for each sign where a maximum of 24 square feet is allowed by-right. The Board has the authority to grant a sign with a display area larger than normally allowed, up to twice the size permitted in Bylaw Section 7.8.5.2 but not more than 40 square feet.
3. The Applicant submitted updated plans on May 10, 2016 including landscape area plans and location plans as well as clarification on the lighting for both signs. Both freestanding signs comply with the location requirements of ZBL section 7.8.2, with the landscape requirements of 7.8.3, and with the lighting requirements of ZBL section 7.4.3. In all other respects the signs appear to comply with the by-right requirements of the ZBL.

The Board has the authority to grant the requested special permit. As with all sign special permits the Board must find that the sign meets the following criteria set forth in ZBL section 7.13.2. Attached is a draft decision your consideration.